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LETTER DATED 31 JANUARY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In my letter addressed to you on 24 January 1991, I requested an immediate meeting of the Security Council to consider the grave situation in the Gulf region. In view of the fact that the Republic of Yemen is a member of the Security Council, to say nothing of the immediate character of the meeting it requested, we expected you to accede to our request on the basis of rule 2 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, which stipulates that "The President shall call a meeting of the Security Council at the request of any member of the Security Council".

Today, one full week having elapsed since the submission of our request for an immediate meeting of the Council, I am most distressed that you have not acceded to our request. This constitutes a dangerous precedent for the conduct of the work of the Council in accordance with its provisional rules of procedure, which remain in effect and which must be protected from becoming subject to personal whims or to the different official positions adopted.

Our concern is increased by the fact that our request for an immediate meeting has been made subject to procedures and conditions that have no relation to the provisional rules of procedure of the Council and the underlying objective of which is no more than to provide a means for procrastination, without any legal grounds, at a time when the situation in the Gulf region is becoming ever more serious owing to the fact that the scope of the military operations in the region has gone beyond that stipulated in Security Council resolution 678 (1990).

While recalling our request of 24 January 1991, we should like to state the following:

1. Rule 2 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council is abundantly clear, and the request of any member of the Council for a meeting of the Council is not subject to or linked with any prior conditions. The grave precedent established by procrastination and delay in acceding to our request will give the opportunity for the Council to be accused of employing double standards in the

positions that it adopts. This is particularly so given that there are clear and binding resolutions that the Council has adopted on the Middle East issue, on Lebanon and on the Golan which still await implementation despite the fact that some of them were adopted more than 20 years ago and despite the fact that Israel is continuing its occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem, the Golan and southern Lebanon.

2. The procedure being followed by the Security Council can only undermine the confidence of those who regard the Council as a just and effective force for the resolution of disputes and conflicts in the world.

3. We believe that the Security Council must meet its responsibilities as stipulated in the Charter and that it should tirelessly pursue its efforts for an immediate halt to the military operations in the Gulf region and to the great bloodshed and destruction that they are causing to the region. Above all, the Council must pursue its efforts with a view to achieving a peaceful solution to the conflict in this vital area of the world and to all the hotbeds of tension from which the region and its people are suffering.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdalla Saleh AL-ASHTAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative